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STATE FOR AF/W  
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TAGS: [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [NI](#)  
SUBJECT: PDP RECONCILIATION ATTEMPT FAILS IN THE SOUTH

REF: LAGOS 889

Classified By: Consul General Brian L. Browne for Reason 1.4 (D).

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SUMMARY  
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11. (C) The Peoples Democratic Party's (PDP) National Executive Committee's (NEC) efforts to mend divisions exacerbated by the struggle over the third term amendment have failed in the south so far. Key invitees failed to appear at the zonal reconciliation meetings in the South-West, and boycotts effectively halted the efforts in most of the South-East states. In the South-South there was strong attendance, but little inclination for reconciliation. Failure of the reconciliation indicates that the PDP is a troubled institution with the Obasanjo-Atiku rift being played out in almost all the states. A few have some home-grown squabbles that add even more rancor to the internecine sniping. The NEC may be incapable of mending fences because it is seen as too partisan (pro-Obasanjo.) Many observers are now just waiting for this open feuding to produce a public rupture of the PDP. End Summary.

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PDP ATTEMPTS RECONCILIATION  
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12. (U) On May 20, the PDP National Executive Committee (NEC) met in Abuja to assess the eruption of heretofore simmering internal divisions in the aftermath of the failed attempt to pass a constitutional amendment allowing a third Presidential term. The NEC established zonal reconciliation committees to address party disunity. Between May 30 and June 8, the zonal committees visited all of the southern states. The South-West committee was led by Murtala Nyako, a retired naval chief; South-East by Senior Presidential Advisor, Jerry Gana; and South-South by Alhaji Shehu Shema, PDP Deputy National Chairman.

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SOUTH-WEST: KEY RIVALS SHUN PEACE EFFORT  
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13. (U) In most of the South-West, key rivals either failed to show up or held steadfast to their hard-line positions. In Ogun State, none of the 19 politicians invited by the committee appeared, including Senator Ibikunle Amosu, a gubernatorial aspirant and Governor Gbenga Daniel's main rival. In Oyo State, none of the three main rivals - impeached Governor Rasheed Ladoja, incumbent governor Alao-Akala, and Ladoja's estranged political godfather Lamidi Adedibu, attended the committee meeting, but their crowds of supporters disrupted the proceedings by chanting solidarity

songs. In Ekiti State, supporters of Governor Ayo Fayose dominated the event. Rival politicians and groups alleged Governor Fayose's men physically assaulted them, and prevented them from entering the venue. Governor Olagunsoye Oyinlola of Osun State and Ondo State Governor Olusegun Agagu took over their states' respective committee proceedings. In both states, rival groups were conspicuously absent, while the governors were surrounded by supporters and political appointees.

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SOUTH-EAST: RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE DISSOLVED  
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14. (C) In the five South-East states, numerous groups boycotted the committee's proceedings claiming all stakeholders were not invited, or because of security concerns. These boycotts limited attendance in every state in the South-East. On June 10 the NEC, irked by the mass boycotts, dissolved Jerry Gana's committee and replaced it with another led by Alhaji Isa Katako, stating Gana's committee "failed to achieve the objectives of the PDP in all materials and particulars." In at least one meeting (in Anambra State) violence broke out when competing factions pummeled each other. (Comment: Evidently pleased with his standard level of poor performance, Gana tossed his hat into the ring, announcing he was seeking the highest office in the land. End comment.)

15. (C) Ebonyi State Deputy Governor told the Consul General that the reconciliation effort in his state was doomed to fail. The members of the committee were not impartial arbiters. They came on a partisan mission to lift one faction over the other. In Ebonyi State, the ulterior motive

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was to promote the candidacy of former Minister of Culture, whom the Deputy Governor called a proxy for Anambra State strongman Chris Uba.

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SOUTH-SOUTH: RIVAL GROUPS TRADE BLAME  
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16. (U) Cross River and Bayelsa States had high attendance at their meetings, and rival politicians openly voiced their complaints, but most stood firmly against reconciliation. In Bayelsa State, Governor Goodluck Jonathan alleged the NEC has not consulted him or invited him to meetings since he became Governor six months ago. Jonathan's main rival, Timi Alaibe of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) claimed the party's structure in Bayelsa has collapsed due to internal strife and "a winner-take-all syndrome."

17. (U) Participation was high in Edo State, but despite the committee's appeals, Governor Lucky Igbinedion and his rival, PDP Board of Trustees Chairman Tony Anenih, held firm to their conflicting positions. In Delta State attendees complained about the controversial PDP re-registration process of several months ago, claiming it was engineered to the advantage of particular groups. The committee did not meet in Rivers State, where Governor and presidential aspirant Peter Odili has maintained tight control and weeded out dissidents long ago though his strong political machine.

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COMMENT  
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18. (C) This PDP NEC reconciliation effort has been a near-total failure in the south so far. The reconciliation committees were hastily established, given no clear mandate, and, most importantly, were peopled by officials who were already tendentious. Now that this rather feeble placebo has been expectorated by an almost febrile and clearly fractious party, hard decisions will be in the offing. The NEC will

have to decide whether to move from ersatz reconciliation to genuine hardball. Seeing that the fake carrot didn't work, will they try to force dissidents into shape or chase them from the party by wielding a real stick? Conversely, will those opposed to the Obasanjo-controlled NEC summon the intestinal fortitude to formally leave the party of incumbency while that party is still alive, albeit staggering? The answer to these questions will not be clear-cut. Thus, we expect a lot of hectoring, some jostling, but few people will dare cross the Rubicon for the time being. End comment.

BROWNE